



# What Does That Mean?

## Basic Courthouse Definitions



A **Statute** is a law passed by elected officials.

A **Trial**, also called a case, is an examination of evidence and law by a judge and/or jury to resolve conflicts or determine if someone charged with a crime is guilty or innocent.

A **Defendant** is a person who is accused of a crime and who is on trial.

A **Witness** is a person who is questioned during a trial by lawyers. Witnesses must take an oath, or a promise to tell the truth, before they tell the court about what they saw or heard.

**Evidence** can be testimony given by a witness, documents, or items that help lawyers prove someone is guilty or innocent.

A **Jury** is a group of people who have been selected to hear all the facts of a case and make a decision on whether or not someone is guilty or innocent.

A **Prosecutor** is the lawyer, or group of lawyers, who present their case to the court to try and prove that a defendant is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

A **Bailiff** is a court officer who maintains order during court proceedings.

A **Court Reporter** is the person in the courtroom who uses a special typewriter to record everything the lawyers, judge, and witnesses say in court.

The **Verdict** is a jury's decision after they have heard all the facts of the case on whether or not a defendant is guilty or innocent.

A **Sentence** is the punishment chosen by the court for a crime that has been committed.

A **Holding Cell** is a guarded place located near the courtroom where people who are in jail must wait for their turn in front of the court.

